

The Newsletter of the

Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society

Winter 2012



USS Iowa – See page 25

www.rnars.org.uk

The RNARS is affiliated to the RSGB

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Subscriptions

Please ensure your name and RNARS number appears on all transactions.

UK: £15 per year due on the first of April and to be sent to the Membership Secretary. Cheques and postal orders to be made payable to “*Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society*”; **bankers orders are available from the treasurer.**

USA: Payment may be sent to Bill Cridland, address above. **All other overseas members:** Please send subscriptions in sterling (GBP) by international money order to the Membership Secretary.

The society banks with Lloyds TSB, 272 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7HN. Sort code: 30 99 20 - Account number: 0022643 - IBAN: GB92 LOYD 3099 2000 0226 43 & BIC: LOYDGB21271.

PayPal: Subscriptions can also be made via **PayPal** through the RNARS website. Click on the *How to Join* page: www.rnars.org.uk

Newsletter via e-mail: Members who elect to receive their Newsletter via e-mail can apply for a reduction in their annual subscription. Please contact the editor for further details. See page four for contact information.

Data Protection

Your details will be held on the society’s data-base by the membership secretary. The committee require your permission with regards to the release of any personal information held on the data-base. If no such instructions are received, it will be assumed that you have no objection to the release of these details to other members of the committee.

Items published in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the RNARS.

Contents

4	Chairman’s Chat
5	AGM Reports
18	Historic Marconi Building Lost
22	Committee Minutes
25	Don’t Shoot!
30	In The Beginning
31	Life & Times
32	Coventry Weekend
37	National Ham-Fest
38	Membership Up-Date
38	Time Machine
44	QRT

In celebration of **Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee**, Doug, our Chairman wrote on behalf of the RNARS to her Majesty in order to pass on our congratulations.

Below is the reply he kindly received.



Chairman's Chat

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Newsletter. Christmas will soon be up on us and together with the committee I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable festive season.

What a year, in more ways than one. First the weather, and what a disappointment that has been this year. It certainly affected us down at HQ. A lot of hard work and effort went into getting the station ready for the HMS Collingwood Open Day only to read in the local newspaper three days before that it had been cancelled due to the playing fields being waterlogged, making them unsuitable for car parking. No one officially informed us that it had been cancelled.

The Coventry get together nearly came to grief through lack of interest by members. Fortunately numbers swelled when family and

friends booked as they recognised a low cost bargain was on offer. They have all asked that we do it again next year but I have declined as the time spent for such a low turnout of members does not make it worthwhile.

Please look at the RNARS web site; www.rnars.org.uk which Joe G3ZDF is constantly updating and he would appreciate your comments and suggestions of possible further improvements. If you have gear for sale or wanted he has a special page available for this purpose.

The new logo is now available on commodities; contact Doug, GØMIU, for your requirements. All commodities with the old logo are now available at much reduced prices; see the commodities list and order form on the back page.

Once again I appeal to you to read the editorial very carefully concerning the correct way to contact the Editor, whether it be to submit an article or obtain your Newsletter by email, failure to follow these simple instructions by members causes unnecessary problems, resulting in unhappy members wondering why they have received no reply/action and much frustration/annoyance at Colin's end.

Finally, would you all check that you are paying the correct subscriptions for your membership as the Membership Secretary informs me we have some members still paying seven pounds. Needless to say if the correct subscription is not paid then no Newsletter is sent. If you do know of anyone who is wondering why they are not receiving their copy please ask them to check their subscriptions.

Regards, *Doug G4BEQ*



Annual General Meeting Report

President's report

The President, Commodore Paul Sutermeister welcomed everyone and said that a president's report was a bit of a misnomer since all the work was done by the Chairman and the Committee.

He reminded members that a number of major items were underway or completed: liaison with RAFARS and RSARS which in his view was particularly important.

The Coventry get-together to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. At the time he had been tied up with the last visit of HMS York to its home city. Exposing new entrants to the activities of the Society. He went on to say how important liaison with Sea Cadets was; unlike the Army and Air Cadets, the Sea Cadets do not receive support from MOD, they do not have communications experts so any assistance we could offer would be invaluable to them.

Finally, he commended the good work done by the Committee.

Minutes of the last AGM; Proposed by G4JBE and seconded by G4ZMP and agreed unanimously.

Chairman's report

Like all societies and clubs we have had our highs and lows over the past year. Firstly I would like to thank the committee for their dedication and hard work over the past year and in particular Joe, our Secretary, who without doubt is the hardest worker of us all. Not only is he very conscientious secretary in keeping the committee and me, on our toes but has spent many hours producing and maintaining a very up to date web site that brings much credit to the RNARS.

It has taken time to put together a committee that are dedicated and work hard to overcome all problems. Gone are the days when some committee members only attended meetings and then forgot about it until the next meeting. I have no room for those who are not prepared to give 100% as this only causes more work for those who are prepared to knuckle down and give everything to the task in hand. I can assure you all that we now have a lean, hardworking dedicated team whose sole object is to update and provide an efficient service to all members. They all work hard on your behalf but their job is not helped when one or two of the membership nitpick minor mistakes publically on air or Yahoo instead of contacting the person direct and sorting out any differences. All of us on the committee are quite willing to stand down and hand over our duties to anyone who feels they could do it better. This is amateur radio, a first class hobby, just enjoy it and take life less seriously.

As the old Bosun said to me when I first went to sea in 1942 and caught me dashing around like a startled gazette. "Look son, when you feel that energetic, lie down till the feeling passes and you will live to an old age". Good advice, and I took it, so here I am well into my 80's and still going strong.

Due to a decision within this establishment to make the Museum Curator redundant and transfer the museum elsewhere, due to pressure of space, grave concerns were raised about our own future. Fortunately after much consultation and investigation into the problem of relocation I did manage to obtain reassurances that we are safe as far as the foreseeable future is concerned.

One of the saving graces was the fact that at the 2011 Open Day we introduced ATV covering the whole event, which went out live via the IOW repeater to Hampshire, Dorset and West Sussex and to the rest of the world by streaming it through the Internet. This generated considerable interest from the powers to be here in the establishment who spent a considerable time in the shack watching events unfold. There was considerable feedback from people who had served in Collingwood worldwide. The Forces Broadcasting Service also took great interest and have asked if they can join up with us at future Open Days. Unfortunately we were unable to cover ourselves with more gold leaf this year as the event was cancelled at very short notice due to weather conditions. Albeit we had made all the preparations.

The shack has continued to be updated and for those who have not visited it yet it will be open at the close of this meeting. You will also have the opportunity to purchase commodities at reduced prices as well as some redundant equipment now on show.

Since the last AGM the Portland Radio Club has been reactivated and is now the Rotor Radio Society, MOVOP, and has affiliated to the RNARS. We have provided them with an FT757 on Permanent Loan and to date quite a few members have made contact.

The highlight of the year has been the Coventry Get Together where we celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with the usual "Up Spirits" I am informed by all who attended that it was a first class gathering for a very low cost. Many of those who attended would like to see this become an annual event but unfortunately the majority of members are not interested. It takes a lot of time and effort to set up without the added anxiety of struggling to get the minimum numbers so that we qualify for the low prices we pay.

I have been extremely keen to interest the new entrants to the Navy to take up Amateur Radio and have pressed to get those who enter the establishment here to visit the shack. We now have in place the organisation for these classes to attend as part of their dog watch instruction and the first class attended last Thursday. Lack of recruitment has delayed this but it is now in place.

The Sea Cadet Corps has now brought its Radio Course training in line with the amateur radio licence and we have been approached by them for the use the HQ shack. This will take place as soon as the Corps finalise the details with HMS Collingwood for training to take place here. At present it is done at HMS Excellent.

The HQ Shack is now an official examination centre for these licences and in fact the first group of candidates have already passed through; successfully I may add.

Over the past year the Chairman of RAFARS and I have been trying to arrange regular Chairman's meetings of the combined service radio societies so that we can discuss the way forward and update each other on the various problems that arise working within the MOD structure, but unfortunately up till now the RSARS are dragging their feet. The day may well come when in order to survive we might well have to combine. Waiting for that to happen before making contingency plans is not a sensible option.

Secretary's report: The new Society logo is gradually being implemented across all stationery, certificates and commodities in order to keep the transition costs to a minimum. If anyone wants a copy for QSL cards etc please get in touch.

There has been quite a lot of correspondence with the remnants of the Plymouth Group including a trip to Liverpool to collect their equipment and documents for safe keeping here at the HQ Shack. Three members of the Group (G3LIK, G3TZM & G4JBE) have undertaken to look at what can be done with the Group's assets in conjunction with other members. At this point Joe asked Dave G4JBE to update the meeting as he had recently attended a Plymouth Association meeting.

Dave reported: *Being a member, I attended the HMS PLYMOUTH Association AGM held in Liverpool on Saturday 6th October 2012. I can therefore report that there is actually no good news! The cut-off date for the decision as to her fate was at the end of September, currently this is still on-going. Captain Tyrell who is heading the latest rescue venture is still in discussion with Peel Ports (current*

owners). It seems the £400,000 sum required to release the ship from the breakers contract has yet to be fully realised, although they have made substantial headway toward that sum. The HMS PLYMOUTH Association have agreed that they will not plough their funds into this venture believing that it is too much of a risk to said funds, they have therefore withdrawn financial support, but will continue to support this new group in every other way possible. It is one thing to raise the necessary funds to release the ship from its contract, it is an entirely different story to then finance the towing of the ship (after all the necessary seaworthiness certification) to her new berth somewhere in the North East as has been proposed. Add to this all the required work to bring her back to a standard ready to be used by Sea Cadets or other parties, let alone getting ready for public visiting again; an enormous task for any one group to undertake.

Whilst it is every ones wish that the outcome for this venture results in the PLYMOUTH being saved, it looks unlikely at this time.

Membership Secretary's report: You should have a copy of the Rally report for Newark this year. but at present we have 824 members in the Society about a dozen of whom are still paying the wrong amount and who I keep on the books just in case they eventually get round to asking for their money back. I think that we should finally take them from the records and tell them that their monies are non-returnable and also put a notice in the next newsletter, after the A.G.M. - to the same effect.

Treasurer's report:

Balance Carried forward 1/4/2011		39,863.95
Sub Total		39,863.95
Income		
Subscriptions	9,428.87	
Commodities	492.05	
Interest	495.43	
Sundry	0.27	

	£10,416.62	£10,416.62
Total Income		50,280.57
Expenditure		
Expenses	714.97	
Rallies	773.85	
Newsletter	3,180.85	
AGM	244.95	
Ins	391.86	
Refund Subs	15.00	
Equipment & Repairs	460.87	
Sundry	180.99	
BT Internet	780.41	
	6,743.75	(6,743.75)
Sub Total		43,536.82
Unpresented Cheques as at 31/3/2012		706.24
Balance of Accounts as at 31/3/2012		44,243.06

Adrian was asked why the BTInternet costs seemed so high. He said that part of that was the initial set up cost in a military establishment had been high and the fact that we were treated as a commercial organization.

He was also asked why we were accumulating so much in our reserves and whether some of the reserves should be put towards reducing subscriptions. The Chairman said he would put that to the Committee to consider.

He was also asked how we had managed to get a subscription value ending in 87 pence. Adrian explained that when payments in non-Sterling currencies were converted we sometimes ended up with odd pence amounts.

The Accounts were proposed by Phil G1LKJ and seconded by Tom GOPSE and accepted unanimously.

Ex Officio's report: The link between the establishment and the society continues to be strong. The Command are very keen to maintain the links between Society and the social events which take place in the establishment throughout the year (i.e. Freshers Fare, Open Day etc). I am more than content to act as a conduit for this as I wholly support the wishes of the society to continue to sustain their membership for the future and also to maintain a keen interest in its works.

This year's Open Day was unfortunately cancelled due to a spate of bad weather that caused waterlogging on the main car parking area. Although the Field Gun competition did take place, the usual visitors to the Radio Society would have been minimal; therefore the decision was made for the society not to be opened to the visitors. As it transpired the day of the event was one of the hottest days of the year and the order of the day was high factor sun cream, short sleeved shirts and keep in the shade.

To improve awareness of the work of the Radio Society to the students currently undergoing training, a class of new recruit Communications ratings visited the Society Tuesday 9 October. They thoroughly enjoyed the visit and felt that they had a greater awareness of Communications skills and now understand that these skills are not solely the bailiwick of the military but a very useful tool for the amateur as well. The management team from Victory Squadron (Phase 2 Training) have agreed that these visits can continue. I have asked them to consider whether other groups of trainees could also attend. The majority of our trainees (not only Communicators) have to use voice procedure and therefore would also enjoy the challenge. The Engineering trainees would benefit from the concepts of radio principals and the basis of engineering that you regularly carry out.

I look forward to another wonderful year working with you and continue to support you in any way I can.

Announcement and presentation of RNARS Awards
The RNARS Certificate of Merit has been awarded to:

Les Lawbuary	EA5AVL	Les, Bob and Peter – along with Bill have been instrumental in getting the 15m Maritime Mobile net up and running
Bob D'Imperio	N4XAT	
Peter Saunders	HZ1PS/VK6PW	
Bill Cridland	WA1HMW	Bill instigated the first ever RNARS website. He has also been the mainstay of the weekend North American DX nets and as the Country Manager for the States has done much to make the RNARS known "over there"
Fred Rafferty	G0HMS	Fred G0HMS has been the backbone of the Bubbly Rats net for many years. He has also been an Area Rep. for many years
Les Horne	GWOJTE	For his long service to the Society as a member of the Committee and as an Area Representative.
Keith Ray	G1GXB	For his long service to the Society as a member of the Committee and latterly as the Shack Manager.
Charlotte Dixon,	Brittania Hotel, Coventry	Charlotte has gone beyond the call of duty in looking after the Society in the hosting and running of the last 2 get-togethers in Coventry.

The Merit Award (G3WNJ Trophy) was presented to Joe G3ZDF for his work as Secretary and Webmaster.

Proposal to appoint an Honorary Vice President; Mick Puttick G3LIK was appointed an Honorary Vice-President of the Society in honour of his long and distinguished service to the Society. This position will enable him to continue to attend Committee Meetings and for

officers of the Society to call on his detailed knowledge of members and processes.

Shack Manager: The Chairman said that Keith G1GXB had had to step down as Shack Manager and that Ray G3KOJ had agreed to take on the position. During the year the Shack had been reorganised, a flat screen TV had been installed to act as an external computer monitor so that digital and CW signals could be displayed to larger groups of people and the appropriate software had been installed on the PCs, the masts and aerials had a yearly check out and repair and the store of equipment had been evaluated to determine what was surplus to requirements. That equipment would be on display in the Shack after the AGM for members to bid on.

QSL Manager: Since the 2011 AGM the QSL Bureau has received 1,096 incoming cards; a 31% increase over the previous 12 months. I reported at the last AGM that I thought the number of incoming GB50RNARS cards had peaked. This assumption was wrong as 527 of the 1,096 cards received were for GB50RNARS activations as compared to 435 cards received during the 2010-11 period.

Again this year most of the GB50RNARS cards; 157, were for Mick G3LIK (111 in 2010-11) then Carl GWVSW 95 (11), Dave G1OCN 92 (106), the London Group 54 (96), Phil G1LKJ 46 (32), Glyn GW0ANA 24 (6), Glenn G0GBI 19 (21), Glynn GW4MVA 18 (20), GB3RN 15 (10) and David G4ZMP 7 (6).

The remaining 569 non-GB50RNARS cards handled by the Bureau were for 145 callsign holders and of these, the callsigns for whom I have received 10 or more cards are; Mick G3LIK (36), the London Group (31), Bob N4XAT (23), GB3RN / HQ callsigns (19), Peter HZ1PS (18), Stan GM4BKV (15), Bill G3TZM (14), Mike GW7EUL (11), Neville G0FOD (10) and Richard G3ZGC (10). Of the 1,096 incoming cards 538 were received from the RSGB QSL Bureau mostly as mentioned previously for the GB50RNARS activations. The majority of the remaining 558 cards were of course received from RNARS members. The highest volume senders being; Bob N4XAT (sending 86 cards to 46 members), the London Group (65/50), Bill G3TZM (58/41), Les EA5AVL (33/29) Stan GM4BKV (31/26), GB3RN / HQ callsigns (30/23) Peter HZ1PS (29/20), Mick G3LIK (19/15) and Glenn G0GBI (12/8). A further 64 member-member cards were also received from 22 members and 117 cards

were received from the RSARS bureau for 47 members and 5 from the RAFARS bureau for 5 members. 9 cards were also received for members from other sources.

Since the last AGM I have distributed, either by post, here at Collingwood, at the London Group AGM, at a number of rallies throughout the country and through local letterboxes a total of 957 cards to 99 members - a 79% increase over 2010-11. The callsigns for which 10 or more cards have been distributed are; GB50RNARS Nov (Carl GW0VSW) 99, GB50RNARS Mar (Mick G3LIK) 94, GB50RNARS Dec (Mick G3LIK) 65, GB50RNARS Apr (LG GB2RN) 54, GB50RNARS Feb (Phil G1LKJ) 51, Mick G3LIK 38, GB2RN / LG Calls 31, GB50RNARS Sep (Glyn GW0ANA) 29, Bob N4XAT 24, GB50RN 22, GB50RNARS May (Glenn G0GBI) 22, Peter HZ1PS 22, Bill G3TZM 14, GB50RNARS Oct (GB3RN) 13, Stan GM4BKV 13, Mike GW7EUL 13, Richard G3ZGC 12, Doug GOLDJ 11 and Neville G0FOD 10. I have also sent 49 cards from 12 members to the RSARS bureau and 8 cards from 7 members to the RAFARS bureau. No cards were received from or sent to the FISTS bureau.

The number of cards in the bureau currently stands at 349 for 159 callsigns and I hope again to distribute a number of these today. Of the 349 cards, 104 are for 36 overseas members and 108 are for 56 UK members who either have no SSAEs or have provided no funds or stamps to cover postage. The Bureau also holds 937 SSAEs for 266 callsign holders. Please feel free to check with me your QSL card and / or SSAE status after the AGM.

From the beginning of this year I have offered members the opportunity to send funds to me via PayPal to cover the cost of overseas postage. This offer has been taken-up by a small number of active members and the balance of each of the subscriber's postal funds can be openly viewed on the Yahoo! online lookup service which also continues to provide an up-to-date status checking facility of the movement of all incoming and outgoing cards and SSAEs through the Bureau. I am happy to provide an adaptable QSL card delivery service to the membership in the UK and worldwide and if it means that I can shift more cards I ask those members who haven't yet done so to contact me to discuss their personal requirements. I also ask those members who do not want or are not willing to collect their cards from the Bureau to make this fact clear on the air.

Running the QSL Bureau doesn't really impact in any great way on my spare time. I am therefore happy, pending your approval, to continue to manage this service on behalf of the Society.

Data Comms: The RNARS Yahoo Group is to be found at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RNARS/> Membership is strictly limited to current members of the RNARS. At present the group has 170 members, a quarter of whom are based outside the UK. Many members have chosen to receive a Daily Digest of messages, a few take no mail [presumably they log-on to the group's website to read mail] while the rest receive all messages as they are sent. Group members can send messages to the group. Any member who becomes lapsed, or who resigns from the society, is removed from the group membership list but can re-subscribe once they are again "current".

I send out a weekly eNews bulletin to the group. These bulletins include the latest membership changes, news of RNARS events plus many other snippets of news. "Stop Press" items of news are sent out as they occur so that group members are kept up-to-date with RNARS activities.

Any snippets sent to me for possible inclusion in a bulletin should be relevant to the RNARS, to the amateur radio activities of RNARS members or to our service backgrounds. Please note that it is best to quote the URL source of information rather than to just "copy and paste" information from elsewhere.

If you need more information about the group, please contact me by email at rnars2news@btinternet.com Thanks to the efforts of Joe G3ZDF, the webmaster, the RNARS website now has a "scrolling news" facility of RN associated news links plus other snippets. This is updated regularly. My thanks to Dave G4JBE for his help and support as the group's co-moderator, and to the RNARS Committee and Managers for all their efforts on our behalf.

Web Site Manager: Firstly, on behalf of the Society I would like to thank Bob Jennings G3NXV for continuing to host the website free of charge and with very high levels of uptime. The website continues to evolve. Subscriptions can now be paid with PayPal. Photos of various Society events are now on the Photo Albums page. A rolling news display updated almost daily has been placed on the home page with news – mainly about the RN and the Society. A History section has been added with details of early Committee membership,

Merit Certificate holders and Merit Award holders - gradually being updated. A Commodities page with details and prices of what is available. The list of links has been greatly extended to cover a much wider range of organisations. Suggestions always welcome on what can be improved and/or included.

Area Rep Co-ordinator: I have had no correspondence with all but a few of the Area Reps, so I am wondering if it is reasonable to continue running this wing of the Society, after all we have the few who DO things for the Society and we also have the many who DON'T - so is it worth the bother?.

Newsletter Editor: President, Chairman and members all, good afternoon all and sorry I can't be with you. Firstly my thanks for all the support I have received from Doug our chair. Next my thanks to Joe Kirk and Wally Walker who have both been very supportive and kept me apprised of committee news and membership up-dates; to Doug Bowen and his wife for looking after the postal distribution of the Newsletter, and finally, my thanks to all who have supported me with articles and news. I volunteered to take on the role of editing the Newsletter rather than see it fail when the previous editor intimated several times his desire to retire. There was no formal hand over other than a couple of e-mails due to a number of factors. Therefore I started my first Newsletter with a blank canvas and used the previously Newsletter to compile the committee and net listings. To all who contacted me pointing out the several inaccuracies, in my defence, I did circulate drafts of the Newsletter to a number of committee members seeking corrections; none were forthcoming so I used the information I had.

I never thought for one minute my efforts would draw so much flack, drips, unwarranted criticism and difficulties from what has proved to be a very small number of members. One example that comes to mind is when a controller of a certain UK net sent me a very rude e-mail when pointing out a very small error in the net list; he was the only member who noticed the very minor inaccuracy. In response I sent an equally terse reply pointing out that I did not compile the list, merely set down the text supplied to me; the result; that controller has for the past few years ignored me when I have called into this net even after he has been reminded by others that I've called in and would like to work me as I'm operating maritime mobile; I no longer bother calling into that net.

Then the case of two overseas members who sent me many brusque e-mails which verged on rudeness on a regular basis for about six months until it became clear, they were confusing the Newsletter via e-mail with the weekly e-news bulletins that Diana used to send out and replaced by a Yahoo group page several years ago and which Diana promulgated many times.

I use separate e-mail addresses and in-boxes for personal correspondence, work, sailing, marine radio courses and my magic bookings; it makes things much easier to manage. Several members repeatedly use an old e-mail address I stopped using when I had cause to change internet provider many moons ago. As a result their mail is not seen by me and as a consequence when they eventually condescended to use the address I use for RNARS matters as per the Newsletter, I receive impolite e-mails asking why I haven't replied or used articles they have submitted. Of all the clubs and societies I am involved with, it is only members of the RNARS, a society based around communication that seem to have difficulty following the instructions I repeatedly publish in the Newsletter with regard to e-mailing me and consequently keeping their e-address up to date.

As stated many times over the years, I am a busy person; I took over the role as editor rather than see a vital facet of the society fold. Regrettably due to the factors above and other reasons, I was minded to give notice and resign as editor finishing with the Spring edition. However Doug Hotchkiss has discussed this at length with me and for the time being I am prepared to continue.

The Newsletter doesn't take up too much time, what does eat into my time is dealing with small minded drippers who have nothing better to do than look for errors and then get on their high horse and those who generate difficulties when they fail to follow the instructions in the Newsletter when e-mailing me.

My thanks again to all who have supported me and to the many friendships I have developed over the years. To my dissenters; you are clearly without fault, therefore you might consider taking over; you'll know who you are?

Awards Manager: Since I've taken over the arduous (?) task of awards manager the bits of paper I've issued are as follows:- Kaleidoscope Award x 2 (Oct 11 and Feb 12) - Applicants from I and W Mercury Award x 3 (May 11, Nov 11 and Feb 12) - Same applicants from I and W and HZ in addition. World Wide Award x 2 (Jan 12 and Feb 12) - Same HZ applicant as above and same W.

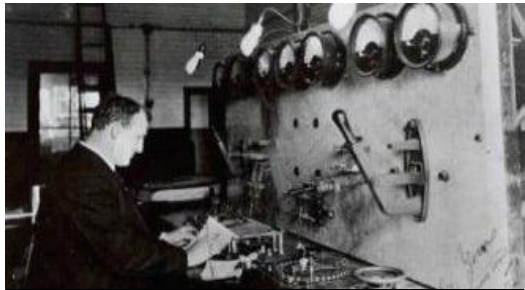
International Navy Award x 3 (May 11, Dec 11 and Feb 12) - Same I, W and HZ applicants as above. Hampshire Award x 2 (Oct 11 and Feb 12) - Same I and W applicants. So in essence I've had applications for all 5 certificates from one Italian station (SWL), one W station and one HZ station. That's it! I'm not really sure how I can embroider the foregoing to make it into any sort of interesting report.

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### **Historical Marconi Building Lost to Fire**

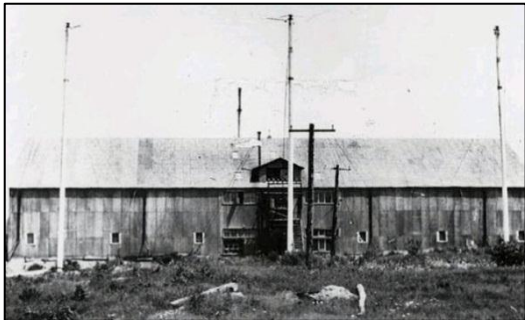
Cape Breton lost a historical landmark on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012 that few Cape Bretoners ever knew existed.

The transmitter building of the first transatlantic wireless service at the Marconi Towers station site near Glace Bay burned down. The transatlantic service was a milestone in world wireless history. It was developed in three stages that are often confused.



Chief Operator L. Johnstone, sending messages to Clifden, Ireland, on the opening day of the transatlantic service: 17 Oct 1907.

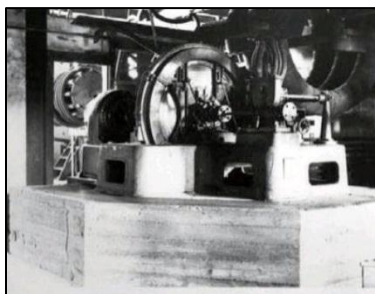
The first test signal was transmitted from Cornwall England to St. John's Newfoundland in December 1901. The first complete morse code wireless message was transmitted from Table Head in Glace Bay to Cornwall in December 1902. The first regular transatlantic wireless telegraph service began in October 1907, between powerful new radio stations at Marconi Towers near Glace Bay and Clifden, Ireland.



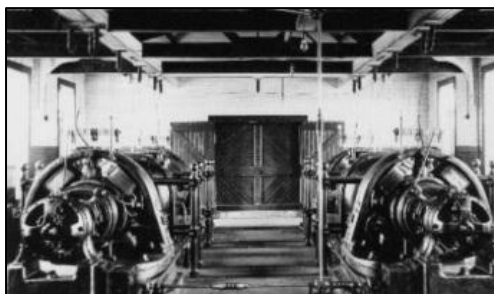
All of these achievements were spearheaded by the famous wireless pioneer Guglielmo Marconi. Wireless equipment used then would

hardly be recognized by a radio engineer today. This was before the electronics era. Silicon chips, transistors and even the vacuum tube had not been invented. Instead, the transatlantic stations, which were described by contemporaries as resembling factories, produced their powerful signals with electromechanical apparatus.

The station contained powerhouses burning coal at Marconi Towers and peat at Clifden. The boilers produced steam for the engine that drove the main alternator. It supplied electricity for DC generators and a 12,000 volt battery the size of a small house.



Spark TX



Five kilovolt DC generators

At the heart of the transmitter building was a spark transmitter that generated radio impulses from a high voltage electric spark. Streams of impulses comprised the dots and dashes of Morse code which was the language of both the wireless and landline telegraph. The radio impulses were fed to a giant umbrella shaped antenna that was about 200 feet high and covered 80 acres. Much of the transmitter building was filled with sheets of metal that hung from the rafters down to ground level. These sheets stored the electric charge that energized the transmitter's spark. This charge storage device was called a “condenser” (modern name capacitor)



hence the building was called the “condenser building”. In principle it was like the condenser that fattens the spark in the spark plugs of a car, but thousands of times larger. It is said that the awesome spark could be heard miles away on a quiet night.

In 1913, a dedicated receiving station at Louisbourg was added to the transatlantic service. After the First World War, vacuum tubes greatly increased the sensitivity of the receivers at Louisbourg and replaced the roaring spark at Marconi Towers with banks of silently glowing tubes. Technological change finally caught up with the Cape Breton stations as the wireless world switched from the long wave lengths that were being used for long distance radio to more efficient short waves.

The Marconi Towers station closed in 1945 and was purchased by Russell Cunningham, a local resident. Most of the property is still owed by the Cunningham family. The home at Marconi Towers that Mr & Mrs Marconi lived in circa 1905-1907 is a provincially registered heritage residence. For more information and pictures: [www.cbwireless.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.cbwireless.ednet.ns.ca)

Above article by Henry Bradford PhD was printed in the Cape Breton Post – 2nd June 2012 and sent in by member Michael Butler VE1CYO with the permission of Henry Bradford.



### **Letters to the Editor**

Dear Colin,  
I am presently researching the history of a former naval radio station sited a few miles south of the village of Eglinton in county Londonderry, Northern Ireland. I'm not certain, but the station may have been run by the US Navy at some



point and handed over to the RN. Locally it was known as Killylane Naval Radio Station.

The site can be found on Google earth: 55° 01' 05.81' North - 7° 08' 36.58' West. There are some photographs which can be found via the link: [www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php/28419-Killylane-NI-WW2-Radio-Control-Station-%2825-02-08%29](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php/28419-Killylane-NI-WW2-Radio-Control-Station-%2825-02-08%29)

Several members of the Foyle and district ARC have plans to run an amateur radio station from the site and any background history would be very much appreciated.

Should any members of the RNARS have any information, I can be contacted as follows:



*Robert Nelson*

32 Rallagh Road, Dungiven, Co. Londonderry, BT47 4TT  
[ronin1946@live.co.uk](mailto:ronin1946@live.co.uk)

Dear Colin,

I used to serve at sea with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and I am a former member of the RNARS.

Back in 1988 I was on a trip to Australia aboard RFA Fort Grange. It was to celebrate the Bi-Centennial. I met a number of RNARS friends whilst out there and then wrote an article for the newsletter. This documented the time out in Sydney and Melbourne. I was wondering if anyone had a paper copy of the newsletter and could scan the article and let me read it? I would be very grateful if you could pass me on to someone who has paper copies of the newsletter dating back to 1988/9. I believe it was the spring article in 1989 that the write up went in.

*John Buttress GØFBP*

Overton Vale Farm & Little Pentre Barn  
Knolton Bryn, Overton on Dee, Wrexham  
Clywd, LL13 0LF  
Tel 07825 063259  
[john101@orange.net](mailto:john101@orange.net)

## **Minutes of the RNARS committee meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012**

### **Present**

|                      |                      |           |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Doug Hotchkiss G4BEQ | Chairman             |           |
| Mick Puttick G3LIK   | Vice-Chairman        |           |
| Wally Walker G4DIU   | Membership Secretary | Via Skype |
| Doug Bowen G0MIU     |                      |           |
| Ray Ezra G3KOJ       |                      |           |
| Keith Ray G1GXB      |                      |           |
| Dave Lacey G4JBE     |                      | Via Skype |
| Bill Mahoney G3TZM   |                      | Via Skype |
| Joe Kirk G3ZDF       | Secretary            |           |
| WOI Dodd             | Ex-officio           |           |
| Colin Topping GM6HGW | Newsletter Editor    | Via Skype |

### **Apologies:**

Les Horne GWØJTE

The meeting opened at 19.30 when the Chairman welcomed everyone. **Minutes of the last meeting:** Bill G3TZM said the minutes mentioned a G4RV aerial when it should be G5RV. Proposed by Wally G4DMU, seconded by Dave G4BJE and agreed unanimously.

**Matters arising:** Progress with transferring responsibility for RNARS callsigns (G3ZDF). Joe reported that the club calls, GB3RN, GBOSUB, G3BZU, G1BZU, G7DOL & G3CRS had been transferred to his name. The licences were held in the shack and were on display. He had looked at the calls from the Plymouth group and had come to the conclusion that we should not take any action on them.

Wally was asked to check if free members had e-mail addresses so that their newsletters could be sent electronically without cost to the Society. Wally said that at the present moment we have twenty-nine club stations, national and foreign, for whom I do not hold E-mail addresses. Dave JBE suggested we put a note on the Yahoo group and also in the Newsletter to try and gather more email addresses.

Purchase of aerial analyser for HQ Shack. Keith had asked Joe to make the purchase and this is in hand. Cost is £279 plus delivery.

Purchase of TV screen for HQ Shack. Joe reported that he had researched the available TVs. Plasma screens were rejected because of the amount of RFI they generate. That left LCD and LED. LCD TVs are less expensive because it is an older technology. He

had purchased a forty inch TV from John Lewis which came with a five year warranty included in the price.

**Asset review and disposal.** Doug reported that there was quite a bit of equipment in the shack that was never likely to be used. A sub-committee consisting of Keith, Mick and Ray was set up to review all the equipment, decide what was surplus to requirements, arrange to get guide prices and then publish the information including in the Newsletter so that members could decide if they wanted to purchase. Any surplus equipment not purchased by members would then be disposed of through E-Bay or at rallies.

**Progress on having a permanent station at the National Memorial Arboretum.** Bill reported that he had visited the memorial which is managed by a former RN Commander and found that there was nowhere to put a permanent station. There was an active local club. As he lives close by Bill will continue to investigate and will report back to the Committee.

**Chairman's report:** The Chairman thanked Colin for his generous donation of a new clock for the shack. He also thanked Keith and Joe for manning the stall at the recent Kempton Park Rally. Not much progress on the joint services meetings, RAFARS had been in touch but nothing heard so far from RSARS.

**Secretary's report:** Two members of the Plymouth Group (G4PTN & GØHBU) had been in touch to enquire about the equipment that Keith and Joe went to Liverpool to collect. I advised them that we were looking after the equipment since Bill Cross had given us twenty-eight days notice to collect it otherwise it would be disposed of. Allan GØHBU, a Plymouth Committee member said that the Group had not been wound up but left open in sine die.

**From Bill Cross GØELZ:** In the latest Newsletter of the Liverpool Marine Radio & Electronics Society, it has been confirmed that HMS Plymouth will be sent for scrap in the near future. A sad end to a fine ship and a closure to the last piece of the Warship Preservation Trust which was wound up in 2006. It looks like the UK has turned its back on its maritime past which for an island nation seems to be very short sighted.

All I can say to the members of Merseyside (HMS Plymouth) Group is remember the good times and remember the fun we had with GB2PLY GBØNYX GØTON and the special calls GB5ØWA GBØIFE GB4VJD GB4VED & GB6ØMF. Bravo Zulu to all who operated from Historic Warships at Birkenhead.

I will ensure we get good pictures from Perch Rock as Plymouth leaves to go to the breakers.

Bill Cross GØELZ

**Advanced RAE** Arrangements are being made for the exam to be held in the HQ shack on 6<sup>th</sup> July. So far two people had indicated their interest.

**Membership Secretary's report:** Wally reported that there were still members paying at old subscription rates that had and that one member was paying an annual subscription every month. He suggested that we put a caveat in the Newsletter that overpayments would only be refunded the first year.

**Treasurer's report:** Treasurer reported that we have: £2542.43 in the current account and £14693.11 in the deposit account. All has been quiet of late except for the flood of membership fees coming in, we have had a number pay by PayPal and I am sure this will increase as time goes on and the word spreads.

As you know Bluefin Insurance Services withdrew from the amateur radio market, there are now two companies taking this on and I am waiting for a review of the shack equipment and insurance requirements to be able to obtain some quotes.

**Shack Manager:** With the help of Bill G3TZM the beam is now operational again with improved weather protection of the co-ax connection and balancing toroids.

**Web Site:** Paypal, single payment option now available. Banner about the Coventry weekend placed on the front page.

**Area Rep Co-ordinator:** Wally said he was having difficulty in contacting Area Reps.

**Newsletter Editor:** Still have on-going problems with members e-mailing me with the wrong info' in the subject. Everyone has had plenty of warning on this, so I'm no longer checking my spam and trash folders.

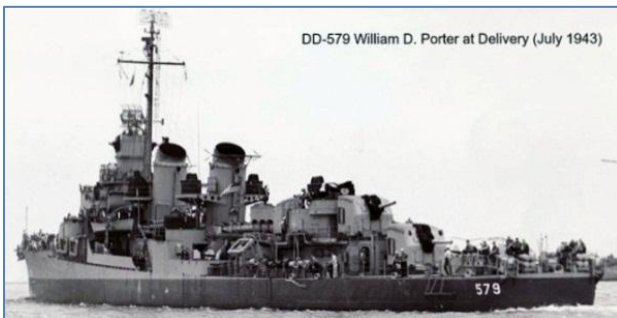
**Commodities Manager:** Doug has updated the price list to reflect the recent increase in postage costs. Coasters, mugs and key rings would in future only be available at rallies.





## **Don't shoot, we're Republicans!**

From November 1943, until her demise in June 1945, the American destroyer 'William D Porter' was often hailed whenever she entered port or joined other naval ships with the greetings; "Don't shoot, we're Republicans!"



DD-579 William D. Porter at Delivery (July 1943)

For a half a century, the US Navy kept a lid on the details of the incident that prompted this salutation. A Miami news reporter made the first public disclosure in 1958 after he stumbled upon the truth while covering a reunion of the destroyer's crew. The Pentagon reluctantly and tersely confirmed his story, but only a smattering of newspapers took notice.

In 1943, the Willie D as the Porter was nicknamed, accidentally fired a live torpedo at the battleship Iowa during a practice exercise. As if this weren't bad enough, the Iowa was carrying President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time, along with Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, and all of the country's W.W.II military brass. They were headed for the Big Three Conference in Tehran, where Roosevelt was to meet Stalin and Churchill.

Had the Porter's torpedo struck the Iowa at the aiming point, the last sixty years of world history might have been quite different. The USS William D Porter (DD-579) was one of hundreds of assembly line destroyers built during the war. They mounted several heavy and light guns, but their main armament consisted of 10 fast-running and accurate torpedoes that carried 500-pound warheads. This destroyer was placed in commission on July 1943 under the command of Wilfred Walker, a man on the Navy's fast career track.

In the months before she was detailed to accompany the Iowa across the Atlantic in November 1943, the Porter and her crew learned their trade, experiencing the normal problems that always beset a new

ship and a novice crew.

The mishaps grew more serious when she became an escort for the pride of the fleet, the big new battleship Iowa. The night before they left Norfolk, bound for North Africa, the Porter accidentally damaged a nearby sister ship when she backed down along the other ship's side and her anchor tore down the other ship's railings, life rafts, ship's boat and various other formerly valuable pieces of equipment. The Willie D merely had a scraped anchor, but her career of mayhem and mishaps had begun.

Just twenty four hours later, the four-ship convoy, consisting of Iowa and her secret passengers, the Willie D, and two other destroyers, was under strict instructions to maintain complete radio silence. Since they were going through a known U-boat feeding ground, speed and silence were the best defence.

Suddenly, a tremendous explosion rocked the convoy. All of the ships commenced anti-submarine manoeuvres. This continued until the Porter sheepishly admitted that one of her depth charges had fallen off her stern and exploded. The 'safety' had not been set as instructed. Captain Walker was watching his fast track career become side-tracked. Shortly thereafter, a freak wave inundated the ship, stripping away everything that wasn't lashed down. A man washed overboard and was never found. Next, the fire room lost power in one of its boilers.

The Captain, at this point, was making reports almost hourly to the Iowa about the Willie D's difficulties. It would have been merciful if the force commander had detached the hard luck ship and sent her back to Norfolk. But, no, she sailed on.

The morning of 14<sup>th</sup> November 1943 dawned with a moderate sea and pleasant weather. The Iowa and her escorts were just east of Bermuda, and the president and his guests wanted to see how the big ship could defend herself against an air attack. So, the Iowa launched a number of weather balloons to use as anti-aircraft targets. It was exciting to see more than 100 guns shooting at the balloons, and the President was proud of his Navy. Just as proud, was Admiral Ernest J King, the Chief of Naval Operations; large in

size and by demeanour, a true monarch of the sea.

Disagreeing with him meant the end of a naval career. Up to this time, no one knew what firing a torpedo at him would mean. Over on the Willie D, Captain Walker watched the fireworks display with admiration and envy. Thinking about career redemption and breaking the hard luck spell, the Captain sent his impatient crew to battle stations. They began to shoot down the balloons the Iowa had missed as they drifted into the Porter's vicinity.

Down on the torpedo mounts, the crew watched, waiting to take some practice shots of their own on the big battleship, which, even though 6,000 yards away, seemed to blot out the horizon. Lawton Dawson and Tony Fazio were among those responsible for the torpedoes. Part of their job involved ensuring that the primers were installed during actual combat and removed during practice. Once a primer was installed, on a command to fire, it would explode shooting the torpedo out of its tube.

Dawson, on this particular morning, unfortunately had forgotten to remove the primer from number three torpedo tube. Up on the bridge, a new torpedo officer, unaware of the danger, ordered a simulated firing. "Fire one; Fire two," and finally, "Fire three." There was no fire four as the sequence was interrupted by an unmistakable whooooooshhhing sound made by a successfully launched and armed torpedo. Lt H Steward Lewis, who witnessed the entire event, later described the next few minutes as what hell would look like if it ever broke loose.

Just after he saw the torpedo hit water on its way to the Iowa and some of the most prominent figures in world history, Lewis innocently asked the Captain, 'Did you give permission to fire a torpedo?' Captain Walker's reply will not ring down through naval history, although words to the effect of Farragut's immortal 'Damn the torpedoes' figured centrally within.

Initially there was some reluctance to admit what had happened, or even to warn the Iowa. As the awful reality sunk in, people began racing around, shouting conflicting instructions and attempting to warn the flagship of imminent danger. First, there was a flashing light warning about the torpedo which unfortunately indicated the

torpedo was headed in another direction. Next, the Porter signalled that the torpedo was going reverse at full speed!

Finally, they decided to break the strictly enforced radio silence. The radio operator on the destroyer transmitted "Lion (code for the Iowa), Lion, come right." The Iowa operator, more concerned about radio procedure, requested that the offending station identify itself first. Finally, the message was received and the Iowa began turning to avoid the speeding torpedo.

Meanwhile, on the Iowa's bridge, word of the torpedo firing had reached FDR, who asked that his wheelchair be moved to the railing so he could see better what was coming his way. His loyal Secret Service guard immediately drew his pistol as if he was going to shoot the torpedo. As the Iowa began evasive manoeuvres, all of her guns were trained on the William D. Porter. There was now some thought that the Porter was part of an assassination plot. Within moments of the warning, there was a tremendous explosion just behind the battleship. The torpedo had been detonated by the wash kicked up by the battleship's increased speed.

The crisis was over and so was Captain Walker's career. His final utterance to the Iowa, in response to a question about the origin of the torpedo, was a weak, "We did it."

Shortly thereafter, the brand new destroyer, her Captain and the entire crew were placed under arrest and sent to Bermuda for trial. It was the first time that a complete ship's company had been arrested in the history of the US Navy. The ship was surrounded by Marines when it docked in Bermuda, and held there several days as the closed session inquiry attempted to determine what had happened.

Torpedo man Dawson eventually confessed to having inadvertently left the primer in the torpedo tube, which caused the launching. Dawson had thrown the used primer over the side to conceal his mistake. The whole incident was chalked up to an unfortunate set of circumstances and placed under a cloak of secrecy.

Someone had to be punished. Captain Walker and several other Porter officers and sailors eventually found themselves in obscure

shore assignments. Dawson was sentenced to fourteen years hard labour. President Roosevelt intervened; however, asking that no punishment be meted out for what was clearly an accident.

The destroyer William D. Porter was banished to the upper Aleutians. It was probably thought this was as safe a place as any for the ship and anyone who came near her. She remained in the frozen north for almost a year, until late 1944, when she was re-assigned to the Western Pacific. However, before leaving the Aleutians, she accidentally left her calling card in the form of a five-inch shell fired into the front yard of the American Base Commander, thus rearranging his flower garden rather suddenly.

In December, 1944, the Porter joined the Philippine invasion forces and acquitted herself quite well. She distinguished herself by shooting down a number of attacking Japanese aircraft. Regrettably, after the war, it was reported that she also shot down three American planes. This was a common event on ships, as many gunners, fearful of kamikazes, had nervous trigger fingers.

In April, 1945, the destroyer Porter was assigned to support the invasion of Okinawa. By this time, the greeting "Don't Shoot, We're Republicans" was commonplace and the crew of the Willie D had become used to the ribbing. But the crew of her sister ship, the USS Luce, was not so polite in its salutations after the Porter accidentally riddled her side and superstructure with gunfire.

On 10<sup>th</sup> June, 1945, the Porter's hard luck finally ran out. She was sunk by a plane which had (unintentionally) attacked it from underwater. A Japanese bomber made almost entirely of wood and canvas slipped through the Navy's defence.

Having little in the way of metal surfaces, the plane didn't register on radar. A fully loaded kamikaze, it was headed for a ship near the Porter, but just at the last moment veered away and crashed alongside the unlucky destroyer. There was a sigh of relief as the plane sunk out of sight, but then it blew up underneath the Porter, opening her hull in the worst possible place.



USS William D Porter going down

Three hours later, after the last man was off board, the Captain jumped to the safety of a rescue vessel and the ship that almost changed world history slipped astern into 2,400 feet of water. Not a single soul was lost in the sinking. After everything else that happened, it was

almost as if the ship decided to let her crew off at the end.

*Kit Bonner, Naval Historian*



### **In the beginning**

In the beginning was the word. And the word was God and when all else was darkness and void without form.

So God created the Heavens and the Earth. He created the Sun and the Moon and the Stars, so that the light might pierce the darkness. And the Earth, God divided between the land and the sea, and these he filled with many assorted creatures.

And the dark salty slimy creatures that inhabited the seashore God called Royal Marines, and dressed them accordingly, and the flighty creatures he called WAFU's and these he clothed in uniforms which were ruffled and foul. And the lower creatures of the sea God called them skimmers. And with a twinkle in his eye and a sense of humour that only he could have, God gave them big grey targets to go to sea on. He gave them many splendid uniforms to wear, he gave them many wonderful exotic places to visit, he gave them pen and paper so they could write home every week, he also gave them make and mends at sea and gave them a laundry to keep splendid uniforms clean.

And on the seventh day as you know God rested, on the eighth day at 07:00 God looked down upon the Earth and was not a happy man. So he thought about his labours and in his infinite wisdom created the divine creature. This creature he called a submariner. And these submariners whom God had created in his own image were to be of the deep and to them he gave white wooly jumpers, he gave them black steel messengers of death to roam the depths of the sea waging war against forces of Satan and Evil. He gave them hotel rooms when they were weary from doing God's will.

He gave them subsistence so that they might entertain the ladies on Saturday nights and impress the hell out of the creatures called Skimmers. And at the end of the eighth day God looked down upon the earth and saw all was good, but still God was not happy because in the course of his labours he had forgotten one thing, he did not have a Submariners white wooly jumper but he thought about it and finally satisfied himself knowing that not just anybody can be a submariner.

*Dave G4JBE 0434*



### **Life and Times of the Radio Officer**

The Radio Officers' Association was born in 1995 with a few, mainly British, members. We created an in house quarterly newsletter called QSO which was initially just a couple of pages of A4. Our radio amateurs section was quickly established, under the acronym ROARS, which had their own section of the newsletter headed QRZ. It became apparent that there was an undercurrent of hidden literary talent within our ranks and the membership and the stories quickly grew. QSO became more of a journal than a newsletter and this culminated in winning a Practical Wireless award a few years ago. Within QSO the QRZ section was, and is, many pages long and a weekly W/T net takes place.

By no means all our current membership were around in the early days and it became apparent that they would like to read some of the outstanding stories that were published in earlier QSOs. We decided to create what was initially called "Best of QSO" and set off

on the extremely difficult task of deciding what to put in and what to leave out. The end result is that the 330 page book now called "The Long Silence Falls - The History of the Radio Officer 1900 - 2000" which will be published in November. This contains a rich cross section of stories from WW2 experiences to Wireless College training, first trips, humour and general nostalgia for a bygone age. It is predominantly about the Merchant Navy but there are sections concerning the aeronautical side of the profession and some stories cover activity with the Royal Navy. We feel the stories within are both entertaining and representative of an era now sadly gone. The ROA wanted to create a legacy with this book and it is to be hoped that we have succeeded in doing so.

If any member of the RNARS would be interesting in purchasing a copy of this book they should send a cheque for £20 made out to the ROA to:

John Garner, 29 Sennen Close, Torpoint, Cornwall PL11 2JJ.



### **Coventry Weekend**

Good weather, good company and a very enjoyable, as well as successful weekend said it all. A total of thirty-eight attended sixteen of whom were members. Ivan having travelled the furthest asked if he qualified for a prize; shades of the old Mercury Rally. The answer was negative, but he was allowed to buy Doug, G4BEQ a pint. For those who complained that it cost too much to get to Coventry I was interested when speaking to Marc, from Essex, who came by train, that he paid £16 return fare having booked on-line the week before.

On Friday morning Bill, G3TZM, Doug, G4BEQ, and Mick, G3LIK, climbed the roof of the hotel to set up the antenna, a full size G5RV and the station on the eighth floor in time for Bill to join in on the Bubbly Rats Net. Once the station was fully up and running Mick was straight on the key working Japan. Bill took great delight in informing Ivan about this as Ivan maintains that a G5RV is really a large dummy load.



A stand was set up in reception ready for the arrival of those attending. The first to arrive was Dave and Margaret, G4JBE the last to arrive was Marc, GØTOC who travelled up by train on Saturday morning in time to catch the coach to the National Arboretum. With the exceptional good weather we had when visiting the National Memorial Arboretum many took the opportunity to take the one hour ride on the road train with its excellent commentary giving a complete overview of the whole area. A moving experience and from comments received all felt the trip well worthwhile.



Following Doug's recommendation, Alison orders the local plonk from the wine list.



Mick carefully checks his change after the drinks are served

“Up-spirits” and a raffle proceeded the gala dinner with Phil and Jackie donating the most prizes followed closely by Helen, John's (GØJSC) daughter, which got things off to a good start. After dinner the professional entertainer, a young lady singer; Milisa Hollick, did a superb job so much so that she had people dancing and joining in.



Jackie & Phil (G1LKJ)



Joe, our secretary



Peter (G3RDR)



George & Glynis Dance



Many of the guests left on Sunday morning for work and other commitments, but some sixteen remained spending the day either in shopping therapy, visiting the Cathedral and the motor & motor cycle museums. In the evening, after a carvery dinner an hour was spent with games and a quiz but as the ladies were intent on returning to their rooms to watch the first episode of Downton Abbey, we poor males had to make do with retiring to the bar. All who attended agreed it was a first class week end and excellent value at such low cost.

Doug G4BEQ



Dave's (G4JBE) joke goes down well with Margaret



Caption to the editor please



NOT the "professional" entertainment



"Knees up Mother Brown"



Doug (GØMIU) & Judith  
*"a glass of wine and two straws please".*



Bill operating GBØCGT



John (GØJSC) & Helen



Mick on the key

In celebration of the Queens Diamond Jubilee, the RNARS held a dinner at the Coventry Hill Hotel between 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September. With a coach tour to the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, near Lichfield, Staffordshire on the Saturday.

A drink reception at the bar was held at 18:00 on the Friday. On Saturday following the coach trip we had Up Spirits at 18:30 when we toasted the Queen on her Diamond Jubilee, when the Chairman Doug G4BEQ read a letter he had in response to the letter he had

sent to Buckingham Palace on behalf of the Society. A grand meal was served to all who attended.

Sunday was a free day with quite a few leaving as they had work to get back to on the Monday. Throughout the weekend a special station was set up in Bill G3TZM's cabin, using a FT100 to a full size G5RV. Mick G3LIK, Ray G3KOJ also operated plus many of those attending the weekend.

A special word of gratitude should be paid to our Chairman Doug G4BEQ for arranging this delightful weekend and to Bill G3TZM who arranged the amateur station with the special call GBØCGT.

*73, Mick G3LIK*



### **Flying the flag at the national ham-fest**

Allen and I arrived in Newark, Thursday mid-morning and proceeded to the rally site to set up the stand.

There did not seem to be as many of the big traders as there were last year. The weather was excellent, almost as good as the weather we used to enjoy at Mercury, but as we were indoors it didn't really matter.



Sixteen members sign in on Friday and a lot of chatting went on together with sales of commodities. Saturday was not so good, we only had five members sign in but we also got one new member MØNCN and one re-joiner G3LET but I also managed to get five possible new members to take away application forms, so I look forward to seeing how many are returned. Allen and I also managed to sell off a few commodities and gave away a lot more, so my stock is now somewhat depleted. We informed a lot of members of the new routine regarding the ordering of the new "T" and sweat shirts

together with the new prices and the fact that it costs nothing to get your own name and callsign embroidered on the chest of the new shirts.

We enjoyed the company of RAFARS and BYLARA on either side of us but there was no sign of RSARS until Saturday when one person turned up and asked us where the Royal Signal's Stand was and we pointed him to the place where it should have been but which at that time was still an empty table.

It was not as good a rally as we expected it to be, there was a lot more socialising, especially as Allen and I were virtually tied to the stand; Allen (2E1HHA) with his wheelie and me with my stick and those chairs which were supplied were not all that comfortable after a couple of hours sitting on them.

Generally speaking, from the society's point of view, it could have been better, but I am told that although the show ground has stated that the prices must go up for next year, the Lincoln Short Wave Club will be fighting them over costs, as they have explained that traders and people just will not come if they have to pay any increase.

I did hear that a member had been putting it around that there would not be a stand this year owing to the fact that he hadn't seen it promulgated. The same person also stated that one of his spies had not seen an RNARS stand at the rally. I would suggest that this person either go to the rally or even better attend the correct rally as I personally have been on our stand at every rally for the last five years. I have already booked us in for next year, and God willing both Allen and I will be there.

*Wally G4DIU 391*

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Time to validate your UK amateur licence?

If you received your licence for life between November 2006 and August 2007 and have not validated it with Ofcom since, then it's time to do so. You can use the on-line system: www.ofcom.org.uk/licensing/olc If you experience difficulties or need assistance in processing your licence on-line, call Ofcom on 0300 123 1000 or 020 7981 3131.

A warm welcome to our new members and updates

New Members	4916	G8HI	Ken Burnitt
	4917	M6BRZ	Badger Ager
	4918	2EØGEF	Geoff Winterbottom
	4919	2EØRNO	Jerry Franks
	4920	MØVOP	Rotor Radar Society
	4921	MØNCN	Rev Mike Gillingham
	4922	G4TZA	Chris Read
Changes	4834	MØHFF	Eric Bray was 2EØDTO
	4898	9H1SF	Steven French change of callsign
Re-Joiners	0018	G3LET	Peter Hobbs
	2617	GW4GJT	Cliff Taylor
	1381	G4LRY	Ron Ratcliffe
	3528	SV2AJX	Paschalis Bountoukas
	1116	G13YMT	Aemar Higgins
Resigned	3280	VK5AF	Jack Peatfield
	4758	G1KRW	Arthur Graves
Silent Keys	2351	G4SNY	John Marsden
	3442	GØMMD	Gordon Shelton



Contest Dates

INORC Contest

12:00 GMT 1st Dec – 12:00 GMT 2nd Dec

Bands: 10, 15, 20, 40 & 80 M

International Naval Contest

16:00 GMT 8th Dec - 15:59 GMT 9th Dec

Bands: 10, 15, 20, 40 & 80 M

A full set of rules can be found on the RNARS web site:
www.rnars.org.uk

Time on my hands - A Cautionary Tale

The Chief Steward buttonholed me as I threaded my way through the throng of embarking passengers around the reception desk. *'Can you have a look this clock Sparks?'* he asked, pointing to the timepiece on the bulkhead above his head. *'What's wrong with it?'* *'It's a couple of minutes fast.'* I checked my watch. It was indeed two minutes fast.

This was my first ship, a Roll On, Roll Off, ferry running between Hull and Gothenburg and I was on my second trip. I was sailing as second Radio Officer for my obligatory training period under the supervision of a First Radio Officer.

I was new to the job and eager to shine. *'Yes, that should be simple enough,'* I said, not realising what I was letting myself in for. *'Have you a step ladder?'* The Chief Steward snapped his fingers at a passing underling. *'Go find a step ladder for the Sparks.'* he ordered in a manner that indicated his hotel trade background.

The underling scurried away and returned a few minutes later with a five foot high step ladder. I cleared a space among the crowd in front of the reception position, set up the ladder and climbed until my face was level with the clock. Here I faced my first problem. I had expected to be able to swing the glass open and push the hand back a couple of minutes. Not a chance. The glass was fixed firmly to the casing.

I peered all round the clock in a vain attempt to find some knob or lever with which I could influence the position of the hands. The case was innocent of any protrusion or device and seemed to mock me with its blandness. I had noticed by this time that the clock did not have a sweep second hand and the minute hand, instead of creeping slowly round the dial, did not move at all for sixty seconds and then, with a clunk, it would advance by one minute.

Maybe there was some control at the back capable of adjusting the hands. I gave a gentle tug at the clock, testing the firmness of its attachment to the bulkhead. It clung with the tenacity of a limpet to a rock and I desisted in my efforts in case I broke something. Hmm, I thought. I need some advice on this. Peering down I saw that my step ladder was now surrounded by a very large crowd of

passengers. Having checked in and found their cabins, they had been wandering about seeking diversion whilst waiting for dinner to be announced. I climbed down and made my way through the audience who obligingly moved aside to let me through and then closed ranks again, obviously prepared to wait for act two of the drama.

In the distance I spied one of the ship's two Electrical Officers. 'Ah Len,' I called, 'Do you know anything about the ships clocks?' He looked at me warily. 'What's wrong?' I explained my struggles so far and he gave a confident grin. 'Oh it's easy enough. On the back of the clock you'll find a couple of studs. Dab a one point five volt battery between these and the minute handle will jump one minute with each dab.' 'But how do I get at the back of the clock? It seems to be fastened to the bulkhead.'

He gave a patient smile. 'If you push the clock upwards it will come away from the bulkhead.' At this point, in retrospect, I should have said that he knew more about the subject than I did and passed the problem on to him. But no; I was still eager to make my mark.

I resisted the temptation to fall round his neck in gratitude for his advice and rushed up to the radio room in search of a battery. A frantic rummage through the drawers and cupboards revealed no trace of batteries. The First Radio Officer was still ashore so I could not enquire where he kept his stock. I found a large torch in one of the drawers so I robbed it of one of its batteries and after soldering a piece of wire to each of its terminals, made my way back to the reception area.

My hopes that the crowd would have diminished were dashed when I saw that it was even larger than before. No doubt word of the entertainment had spread and more bored passengers had arrived to watch. With my battery in my jacket pocket I remounted the steps and gave the clock a tentative push upwards. It gave a little and I was able to lift it clear.

Inspection showed that it was connected to a couple of black coloured wires emerging from the bulkhead. There were also a couple of studs on the back of the clock as the electrician had said, the terminals to which the wires were attached and the studs were

devoid of any markings. Quickly I whipped the battery from my jacket pocket and dabbed the wires onto the studs. I heard a clunk from the mechanism and rejoiced at the simplicity of it.

I rejoiced that is, until I checked the clock against my watch and found that it was now three minutes fast. Obviously I had connected the battery the wrong way round. All I need do to wind the hand back was connect the battery the other way round. Then I was in a dilemma. I hadn't taken note how I had connected the wires. I tried once more dabbing the studs and heard the familiar clunk.

This time I made sure that I kept the wire with which I had touched the left hand stud firmly between the thumb and forefinger of my left hand. Gingerly, I turned the clock round and a check against my watch showed it was now four minutes fast. I must have again connected the wires the wrong way round. The next time I made sure that I dabbed the wire in my left hand four times on the right hand stud. A check now showed that the clock was eight minutes fast.

Fighting down a rising panic I again tried connecting the wires in what I thought was a logical manner but no matter what I did, every time I connected the battery the clock, minute hand advanced remorselessly. By this time the clock was fifteen minutes fast. I realised then what I should have realised earlier. No matter which way the battery was connected the clock minute hand would always advance.

As I stood there in a quandary at the top of my step ladder, surrounded by an expectant and interested crowd, I had a sudden, 'Light bulb moment'. The solution was simple. All I had to do was disconnect the clock from one of its wires and thus stop it. A wait of fifteen minutes then a reconnection and Bingo, problem solved.

I put this cunning plan into operation by disconnecting one of the wires and stopping the clock. I left it hanging by its remaining wire and descended the step ladder once more. I made my way to the far end of the reception area to wait out the fifteen minutes. This had the effect of polarising the crowd. About half of which waited

expectantly beneath the clock whilst the other half followed me, keen to see what I was going to do next.

I sat down and, keeping a keen eye on my watch, waited the fifteen minutes necessary for the universe to catch up with the reception area clock. Just before my fifteen minute vigil ended, I pushed my way through the crowd, mounted the step ladder and, bang on the fifteenth minute, reconnected the clock. I refastened it to the bulkhead and dismounted a final time.

The chief Steward was delighted, his clock now indicated the correct time and I went on my way rejoicing, ignorant of the fact that all the ship's clocks were connected in a series chain and controlled from a master clock on the bridge. Breaking the chain as I had done had the effect of stopping every clock in the circuit and when I reconnected the reception area clock they all started up again but showed fifteen minutes slow. Reviewing the situation I can see that this was a less than satisfactory outcome.

Starting from a position of one clock being two minutes fast and the rest showing the correct time I had arrived at a situation where one clock showed the correct time and the rest were now fifteen minutes slow.

The first indications of flak came from the Chief Engineer. He was a devout trencherman and made a point of always being the first into the saloon for meals. Apparently the clock in his cabin was one of those connected in the chain and was thus was fifteen minutes slow. When he arrived in the saloon and found most of the rest of the ships officers starting their second course, he flew into a tantrum. I sat and watched the fireworks totally oblivious of the fact that this was all down to me.

One of the affected clocks was in the engine control room and luckily before any real damage was done, one of the engineers noticed this clock was not showing the correct time and checked with the bridge. It is interesting to muse that, comparing logs, the engine room might have left port fifteen minutes later than the bridge. It was probably the First Officer who rectified the problem by doing something to the master clock system and advancing all the ships clocks by fifteen minutes.

Later as I passed through the now quiet reception area the steward on duty hauled me up short. 'Hey Sparks, this clock is fifteen minutes fast.' With a muttered, 'Sorry, can't stop I'm due on watch.' I hurried away.

If I learned anything from this incident it was to always to test how deep the water was before diving in. I resolved in future never to touch anything without first finding out as much as possible about how it was supposed to work. But more important still, never do anything if someone else will do it. This latter rule had obviously been followed by the helpful Electrical Officer.

Roy France

2012 – AGM Pictures



"I've got the scrolls Paul." "I wondered why you were walking like that Doug."



Mick receives his appointment as Hon' Vice President



Doug, our commodities manager



Joe & Paul



Ian G3APO



"AGM. What AGM?"
"We're only here for the beer!"



The new range of personalised RNARS commodities

QRT - Closing Down

Once again I'll kick off with my sincere thanks to all who have contributed and to all who support me; and a reminder that I am always looking for articles, please help; but first a reminder from the Chief GI.



Right you horrible lot, pay very careful attention.
When you hemail the editor, use the following
address:

rnars@colinsmagic.com

and **ONLY** enter **RNARS** in the subject.

If you enter anyfing else in the subject of you hemail
it will be hotomatically deleted and not seen by your
editur and I'll be having a wurd in your earol.

In these days of increasing postal charges, the committee have been looking at various ways of reducing the cost of distributing the Newsletter. Proposals have included franking mail and using plastic envelopes. The cost of a franking machine for metered mail is prohibitive. From experience, plastic envelopes are difficult and fiddly to open, seal, address and handle. Therefore the committee is pushing to get as many members as possible to sign up to receiving the Newsletter via e-mail. As an incentive, you qualify for a discounted membership rate of ten pounds per year; a saving of five pounds. There are a number of affiliated club stations for which the society does not have an e-mail address; please, if you are involved with an affiliated club, please furnish me with an address and help the society reduce postal charges.

Subscribing to the Newsletter via e-mail in three easy steps:

- 1 Address an e-mail to **rnars@colinsmagic.com**
- 2 In the subject, **ONLY** enter **Newsletter Subscription**
- 3 In the body of your e-mail, your name, postal address, callsign and RNARS number.

Any deviation from the above with regards to information in the subject and your email will be automatically deleted

Please; DO NOT send an e-mail with a list of your mates who wish to subscribe, each member has to subscribe from the e-mail address to

which they want the Newsletter delivered to. The automated system doesn't read e-mail addresses contained within the body of an e-mail, only the address it has come from. In the past, certain well-meaning individuals have caused me a lot of difficulties when they have compiled lists of fellow members and included them all in one e-mail.

I really do appreciate the e-mails, letters and telephone calls I receive after each Newsletter is published, thanks to all who take the time to do so. As always I'm desperate for articles. Without articles, there's no Newsletter, please help out. Closing date for articles for the Spring Newsletter will be 30th March 2013.

Summer on the east coast of Jockland was almost non-existent, it seemed that winter ran into a week of spring like weather around Easter which ran into the rainy season. June and July were completely washed out with gales and heavy rain. The log on my yacht only registered seventy miles this year; a far cry from my seasonal average. Let's hope that next season is a significant improvement. Now that the clocks have gone back and we are only a few weeks from Christmas, all the very best to you and yours and have a guid New Year.

Well that's about it from me, got to go now; romantic fool that I am, I booked a table for Gillian's birthday. I know it will end in tears; she's not that good at snooker. Take care and all the best.

Regards, Colin 1870



RNARS Nets

All frequencies +/- QRM. DX nets are GMT; UK nets are GMT or BST as appropriate. The list is compiled by Mick Puttick G3LIK mick_g3lik@ntlworld.com / 02392255880, if there are any inaccuracies contact Mick.

UK	Time Local	Freq	Net	Control
Daily	2359-0400	145.725	Midnight Nutters	Vacant
Sun	0800	3.667	SSB-News 0830	G3LIK
	1000	7.088	Northern Net	GM4BKV
	1100	145.4	Cornish VHF Net	GØGRY
	1100	7.02	CW Net	G4TNI
Mon-Fri	1030-1330	3.743/7.065	Bubbly Rats	GØHMS/GØGPO
Mon	1400	3.575/7.02	QRS CW	GØVCV
	1900	3.742	North West-News 2000	GØGBI
Tue	1900	3.528	CW Net	G3LCS
Wed	1400	3.74/7.088	White Rose	G4KGT
	1930	3.743	SSB & News 2200	GØOAK
	2000	145.4	Stand Easy	Vacant
Thurs	1900	3.542	Scottish CW	GM3XGX
	2000 GMT	1.835	Top Band CW	GØCHV/G4KJD
	2000	145.575	Scottish 2M	GMØKTJ/P
Fri	1600	10.118	30M CW	SM3AHM
Sat	0830	3.74/7.088	GØDLH Memorial Net	GØVIX

DX	Time GMT	Freq	Net	Control
Daily	0800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
	1430	21.41	DX Net	WIHMW/EA5AVL/K4XAT
	1800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
Mon	0930	3.615	VK SSB	VK1RAN/VK2RAN
Wed	0118-0618	7.02	VK CW	VK4RAN
	0148-0648	10.118	VK CW	VK4RAN
	0800	3.62	ZL SSB	ZL1BSA
	0930	7.02	VK CW	VK5RAN
	0945	7.09	VK SSB	VK1RAN/VK5RAN
Sat	0400	7.09	VK SSB	VK2CCV
	1330	7.02	VK CW	VK2CCV
	1400	7.09	VK SSB DX	VK2CCV
	1430	21.41	RNARS DX	WA1HMW
Sun	0800	7.015/3.555	MARAC CW	PA3EBA/P14MRC
	1430	21.36/28.94	RNARS DX	WA1HMW
	1900	E-QSO	When HF poor	VA3ICC
	1900	14.33	N American	WA1HMW

RNARS activity frequencies

FM	145.4								
CW	1.824	3.52	7.02	10.118	14.052	18.087	21.052	24.897	28.052
SSB	1.965	3.66	3.74	7.088	14.294	14.335	18.15	21.36	28.94

RNARS Commodities List and Order Form

Write clearly and use block CAPITALS

RNARS No: _____

Call-sign: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Phone: _____

Item	Colour	Qty	Size	Price	P&P	Total
Sweatshirt Old Logo	Grey/Navy			£5-00	£2-50	
Sweatshirt New Logo	Navy			£15-00	£2-50	
Polo Shirt Old Logo	Navy/White			£5-00	£2-50	
Polo Shirt New Logo	Navy			£15-00	£2-50	
Tie				£4-00	£1-00	
Baseball Cap				£4-00	£2-70	
Gold Blazer Badge	(New style)			£10-00	£0-70	
Gold Blazer Badge	(Old style)			£5-00	£0-70	
Lapel Badge				£1-00	£1-00	
Log Book				£3-00	£2-50	
Total Enclosed						

Before ordering older stock items, check as to available, sizes and colour of sweatshirts and polo shirts. **New style polo shirts** can be personalised with name and call-sign details from: rnarscommodities@btinternet.com

Small 32-34, Medium 36-38, Large 40-42, X-Large 44-46+

Please send completed form together with PO or cheque made payable to RNARS to: Doug Bowen GØMIU, 14 Braemar Road, Gosport, PO13 0YA

Overseas members, please add £5-00 to cover additional postage.

Please allow fourteen days for delivery and while these prices are correct when going to press, prices do vary and are subject to change.

Following many enquiries, the return of the RNARS Shack Clock

The clock is nine inches outside diameter in a white plastic casing and has a quartz movement (AA size battery not included). Each clock is personalised with your callsign, RNARS logo and the 500 KHz (red) & 2182 KHz (green) silence periods as per the image. Each personalised clock costs £12 and £4 for UK postage and packing.



Orders from overseas members may be possible with payment via PayPal. Please e-mail me for more information and I will advise you of prevailing postal and exchange rates: **rnars@colinsmagic.com** and remember to only put **RNARS** in the subject. At the time of going to press the exchange rate and surface postal charges approximate to USA \$33-00.

UK orders are normally processed within fourteen days of receipt of order. Complete and send the form below with a cheque or postal order to the value of £16 made payable to "**Colin Topping**" to the following address:

17 Mount Melville Crs, Strathkinness, St Andrews, KY16 9XS

I would like to order a shack clock personalised with the RNARS logo and my callsign. **(Please print carefully)**

Name: _____

Call & RNARS No: _____ | _____

Postal Address: _____

Post code: _____

Telephone No: _____

E-Mail: _____